

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) An air decontamination system for mail processing, comprising

a sealed mail processing area having an air inlet;

a vacuum unit which creates a negative pressure within said area, by suctioning air through the air inlet into said area and then from said area into an inlet of said vacuum unit;

a work surface disposed in said sealed mail processing area wherein an object of mail may be introduced onto said work surface, said work surface being positioned at a predetermined height above a floor of said sealed mail processing area, said air being suctioned downwardly through said work surface; and

a filter unit which filters air as said air is drawn out of the area.

2. (original) The air decontamination system of claim 1, wherein said sealed room has a modular construction.

3. (original) The air decontamination system of claim 1, wherein said sealed room includes removable walls.

4. (original) The air decontamination system of claim 3, wherein said sealed

room includes at least one of a removable ceiling and a removable floor.

5. (original) The air decontamination system of claim 3, wherein said sealed room includes a removable ceiling and a removable floor.

6. (original) The air decontamination system of claim 1, wherein said sealed room has at least one transparent wall.

7. (original) The air decontamination system of claim 1, further comprising:
an air lock room connected to said sealed room,
wherein said air inlet extends between said sealed room and said air lock room, and wherein the air suctioned through said air inlet resides within said air lock room.

8. (original) The air decontamination system of claim 7, further comprising:
another air inlet which allows air to pass from an outside source
into said air lock room, wherein the negative pressure created by said vacuum unit draws air from said outside source into said sealed room through said another air inlet and said air inlet.

9. (original) The air decontamination system of claim 8, further comprising:
another filter unit connected to said another air inlet, said another
filter unit filtering air from said outside source.

10. (original) The air decontamination system of claim 1, further comprising:
an intercom system which allows a person outside said room to
communicate with a person inside said room.

11. (original) The air decontamination system of claim 1, further comprising:
a warning device which provides an indication that said sealed room is in
use.

12. (original) The air decontamination system of claim 1 , wherein said
vacuum unit creates a laminar flow of air within said sorting room.

13 . (original) The air decontamination system of claim 1 , wherein said filter
unit includes:

a first filter which filters particles within a first range of sizes; and a
second filter which filters particles within a second range of
sizes,

wherein said second range of sizes is smaller than said first range of sizes.

14. (original) The air decontamination system of claim 13 , wherein said
filter unit includes a third filter which removes chemical contaminates.

15. (currently amended) A method for removing contaminants from air in a sealed mail processing area, comprising:

providing a work surface at a predetermined height above a floor of said sealed mail processing area;

introducing an item of mail onto [[a]] said work surface in the mail processing area;

creating a downward flow of air within said area, said downward flow of air transporting contaminants from said item of mail into an inlet of a vacuum unit which created said downward flow of air;

said downward flow of air traveling through said work surface disposed in said area; and

filtering the air after said vacuum unit has caused the downward flow of air to pass through said work surface to remove said contaminants.

16. (original) The method of claim 15, further comprising:

assembling the mail sorting room.

17. (original) The method of claim 15, wherein said mail sorting room is a sealed room which contains an air inlet and an air outlet.

18. (original) The method of claim 17, wherein said filtered air exits the outlet of said sealed mail sorting room.

19. (original) The method of claim 17, wherein said sealed room has a modular construction.

20. (original) The method of claim 16, wherein said sealed room includes removable walls.

21. (original) The method of claim 20, wherein said sealed room includes at least one of a removable ceiling and a removable floor.

22. (original) The method of claim 20, wherein said sealed room includes a removable ceiling and a removable floor.

23. (original) The method of claim 20, wherein said sealed room has at least one transparent wall.

24. (currently amended) The method of claim 15, ~~further comprising~~
wherein:

said work surface is a surface of a mail sorting table, the method further including positioning the inlet of said vacuum unit underneath a mail sorting table in said room.

25. (original) The method of claim 15, wherein said sealed room includes an intercom system which allows a person outside said room to communicate with a

person inside said room.

26. (original) The method of claim 15, wherein said sealed room includes a warning device which provides an indication that said sealed room is in use.

27. (original) The method of claim 15, wherein said downward flow of air is a laminar air flow.

28. (original) The method of claim 15, wherein said filtering step includes:
filtering particles within a first range of sizes from the air suctioned from the edges of said table; and
filtering particles within a second range of sizes from said filtered air,
wherein said second range of sizes is smaller than said first range of sizes.

29. (original) The method of claim 28, wherein said filtering step includes filtering chemical contaminants from the air suctioned from the edges of said table.

30. (original) The method of claim 17, further comprising:
attaching an air lock room to said mail sorting room,
wherein said air inlet extends between said sealed room and said air lock room, and wherein the air suctioned through said air inlet resides within said air lock room.

31. (original) The method of claim 30, further comprising:

wherein negative pressure created by said vacuum unit in said mail sorting room draws air from into said sealed room through said another air inlet and said air inlet.

32. (original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:

another filter unit connected to said another air inlet, said another filter unit filtering air from an outside source.

33. (original) The method of claim 15, further comprising:

providing a mail cleaning device in the mail sorting room, said mail cleaning device including a chamber having an air inlet and an air outlet, said air outlet connected to a vacuum unit and a filter, said vacuum unit suctioning air through said air inlet to create an air flow through said chamber; and

inserting the item of mail into the mail cleaning device.

34. (canceled)

35. (canceled)

36. (canceled)

37. (canceled)